10: Linton E-5 (1920-1921)1939
OX6 Marquesas OX6

583 formal marriage of this sort. The ordinary marriage involved no ceremony or gift exchanges and was merely the selection of a permanent partner by the eldest child as the hereditary household head. Unmarried individuals then attached themselves to these households in subsidiary positions. Because of the shortage of women, almost every girl had an opportunity to become the head wife in a household. Only rich households had subsidiary wives. Monogamous marriages occurred only among the very poor or in rare cases of strong personal attachment.

888 Old age brought no prestige in the Marquesas, and respect for parents was impossible in a society where a man was outranked by his son at birth and merely acted as regent until the child was old enough to marry. The high point of life for the Marquesan came during his years as active head of the household. The only people who remained important in old age were [793] the inspirational priests. Ceremonial priests, when they became too old to officiate actively, had to give up their positions. The old women carried on most of the woman's work in the house, while the young women entertained the men; old men could always find odd jobs to keep themselves occupied. The old were neglected but were never killed or mistreated for fear that they might take revenge later, when they became ghosts.

[578 273] There was very little quarreling among the Marquesans, and that only when they were drunk. Theft of food was not in-685 frequent but was not seriously regarded. The owner of the food would be irate and would punish the thief if he could catch him, but the man who got away with the theft successfully would boast about it later when the owner's annoyance had had time to subside. There was practically no theft of anything except food, probably because all household objects were indi-682 vidually made and decorated so that the stolen article would be promptly recognized. There were some killings, almost invariably for only two causes: sexual jealousy during drunkenness, and revenge, usually by sorcery, for previous killings. The Marquesans had no form of legal procedure in handling crime. Each household was supposed to take care of its own interests.

/66 cont./ 585 833 [192] [195]
of the opposite sex. In mixed company ke'a, mo'e piki, or hano are used.

During the act, married women display their excitation with more abandon than in the premarital period.

In marital sexual relations, there is no after-play. Both individuals go out and wash, one after the other, and then may go to sleep or resume sexual intercourse.

Impotency among robust males below the old-age level 159 833 837
is relatively rare. During our stay, we only encountered one male who suffered from this condition. Another historic case of a well-known chief who was impotent with his wife was recounted. In the one case observed, the individual was married to an attractive woman who remained with him, but /67/ compensated by engaging in extramarital intercourse with high frequency, often making little attempt to conceal her liaisons from her husband. He displayed an attitude of resignation and often disinterest concerning her unions with his personal friends, but became irate when he suspected she was having relations with individuals that he did not like. His relations with his wife were limited to mutual oral stimulation of the genitals, performed infrequently. The rest of the community regarded him with some pity, often expressing wonderment as to the basis of his condition, in view of the fact that he had won renown as a youth for excessive virility and potency. His appellation was Hati - "Broken" - an obvious reference to his affliction. [551] During our stay, Hati appeared to be extremely maladjusted. [158] His conversation was often irrational, and he was obsessed with the topic of sexual potency. He drank to excess by the culture's standards, remaining drunk throughout a good part of the day, several days a week. [733] He worked rarely, and was an indifferent worker when he was employed. Shortly after our return to the United States, we received information that he had developed a full-blown psychosis, necessitating hospitalization. [158]

Impotency in elderly males is not regarded as unusual. 833 885 [832]
Oral stimulation is practiced in such cases, as in that cited above.

/106 cont./

tasks subsumed under the modern categories of "men's work" and "women's work" were distributed in a radically different way in the aboriginal period. Preparation of foods, gardening, care of children, manufacture of tapa cloth, cosmetics, ornaments, baskets, etc., were all in the hands of women, who could also hold rather high ceremonial posts (see Handy, 1923).

At present, the most elderly women, who grew up before or around the turn of the century, are generally acknowledged to possess the occupational skills once characteristic of Marquesan women during the aboriginal period. Such skills (basketry, mat-making, medicinal arts, etc.) represent only a small portion of tasks that were once considered women's work, and no longer exist as a result of the breakdown of the culture. Actually, the modern Marquesan woman performs considerably fewer economic functions of importance than did her aboriginal counterpart, as the introduction of partial cash economy has made it possible for her to buy the things which she may ordinarily have made herself. Furthermore, the ability to purchase items formerly produced at home has become a sign of prestige, so that there is no longer any motivation to learn the formerly important crafts and skills of woman's work which are gradually being forgotten. /107/

Like the statements about the relative power of women vis a vis men in Marquesan society, Linton's claims of female dominance in the sex act are not borne out by evidence from other sources.

One is confronted with considerable difficulty in attempting to reconcile modern behavioral data, the historic reports and other ethnographic records with claims of female dominance in sexual relations. Linton states that Marquesan females were incapable of normal orgasm without extensive foreplay stimulation, deriving this from a supposed practice of prolonged inorgasmic sexual play in childhood rendering rapid orgasms impossible.

However, at present, Marquesan women and girls experience relatively little difficulty in having rapid orgasms without foreplay of any type. Certainly, there is little